REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in the current application. Claims 10-18 have been withdrawn without prejudice to the subject matter therein. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended herein to more clearly define the subject matter.

The Abstract has been objected to by the Examiner. The Abstract has been amended to reflect the pending method claims. The title has also been amended to more clearly reflect the invention.

Paragraph 24 of the specification has been objected to by the Examiner. This paragraph has been amended to reference the common assignee.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claims the subject matter of the invention.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,811,805 to Gilliard et al.

The Claims As Amended Satisfy 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2

Although Claims 1-9 are rejected as indefinite, only Claim 3 is referenced in the Office Action as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner cites the terms "thin layer" and "high velocity" as relative terms that render the claim indefinite. Applicants have amended claim 3 to clarify these terms. Applicants submit that the amended claims satisfy § 112, ¶ 2. Support for these amendments can be found in the Specification at ¶¶ 15, 16, 32, 33, and 34.

The Claims As Amended Are Patentable Over Gilliard

Claims 1-9 were rejected as obvious over Gilliard. Applicants submit that Gilliard does not disclose the step of "dampening the vibration of the coating nozzle body by choking the first nozzle orifice of the first fluid passageway to maintain a steady back pressure in the first fluid passageway sufficient to stabilize the coating nozzle body against vibration modes from external and internal sources," as recited in amended Claim 1. Gilliard makes no mention of any vibration dampening step. In fact, Gilliard does not even discuss vibration of the coating nozzle

as a problem—let alone discuss any steps to overcome vibration modes. Support for this amendment can be found in the Specification at ¶¶ 14, 18 and 31. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are patentably distinct from Gilliard because Gilliard at least fails to disclose the step of "dampening the vibration of the coating nozzle body . . .," as recited in amended Claim 1.

Gilliard also does not disclose the step of "ejecting the atomizing fluid from the second orifice . . ., and entraining a portion of the film layer of coating material within the atomizing fluid ejected from the second orifice . . . wherein the film layer of coating material is atomized into a plurality of coating material particles within the atomizing fluid," as recited in amended Claim 3. Instead of first ejecting the atomizing fluid to then entrain the coating material within the atomized fluid as disclosed by Applicants invention, Gilliard discloses a device which first "utilizes pressurized air to mix with a liquid and thereby to form an air-liquid mixture which is then dispensed or delivered through an orifice with an appropriate size onto an object to be coated." Gilliard '805, col. 11:24-27 (emphasis added); *see also* col. 11:34-37; col. 11:44-50. In other words, Gilliard discloses a coating method that first mixes the coating with the atomization fluid and then ejects the mixture from the orifice. Applicants disclose and claim a coating method that first ejects the atomizing fluid which then entrains the coating within the atomized fluid. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are patentably distinct from Gilliard because Gilliard at least fails to disclose the step of "entraining a portion of the film layer of coating material within the atomizing fluid ejected from the second orifice," as recited in amended Claim 3.

Should the Examiner require any additional information regarding this Response, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4200.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 4/8/05

Ronald L. Sigworth
Reg. No. 53,592

KENYON & KENYON
1500 K Street, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 220 - 4200 (telephone)
(202) 220 - 4201 (facsimile)
534504v1 (RLS/bep)